

## REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for reviewing the present application.

A total of 19 claims remain pending in the present application. The foregoing amendments are presented in response to the Office Action mailed April 1, 2010, wherefore reconsideration of this application is requested.

By way of the above-noted amendments, claims 7, 18 and 24 have been amended to more precisely define features of the present invention. More particularly, each of claims 7, 18 and 24 have been amended to recite a limitation of switching “ a predetermined number of connection entries together …”, and further to define that the second control bit “is associated with independent and concatenated payloads” and finally to define a step of “cross-connecting a second payload with a first payload if the second control bit is set”. Claims 10-11 and 20 have been canceled, and claims 12, 21, 22 and 27 have been amended to reflect the amendments made in claims 7, 18 and 24. Support for these amendments may be found at, for example, page 5 lines 7-18, and at page 6 line 15 et seq. of the original specification. No new subject matter has been introduced.

Referring now to the text of the Office Action:

- claims 2-8, 10-14, 17-22 and 24-27 stand rejected under 36 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The above-noted rejection is believed to be traversed by the above-noted amendments, and further in view of the following discussion.

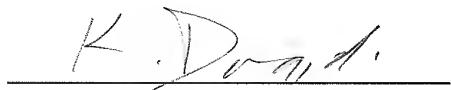
The Examiner’s suggested wording (“ a predetermined number of Virtual Tributary connection entries together …”, described at paragraphs 3-5 of the Detail Action is well taken. However, the specification describes connection entries in relation to both Virtual Tributaries and overhead. Accordingly, Applicant has elected to amend the claims to refer to “connection entries”, in accordance with the original specification.

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It is believed that the Examiner's objections at paragraph 6 of the Detailed Action are traversed by way of the above-noted amendments.

In view of the foregoing amendments and comments, it is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance. Early reconsideration and allowance of the present application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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